

Transitions from Childhood to the Workforce
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/tcw>

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Dear NSF Principal Investigator:

I am writing to make you aware of a new one-time funding opportunity relating to your current NSF award. We are inviting NSF grantees and their colleagues to apply for funding supplements that will help to stimulate and facilitate cross-disciplinary interactions among researchers who share the common goal of understanding children's learning and transitions to the workforce. The application deadline is March 29, 1999. Your project has been identified as one that is potentially relevant to this initiative.

As you may know, the NSF thematic area on *Educating for the Future* (EFF) will focus, in part, on research that produces a better understanding of learners and the learning experience, from childhood to the workforce. To achieve the goals of EFF, it will be necessary to engage in focused interdisciplinary research that illuminates the processes by which children learn. In the recent National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) report, "A Research Initiative for America's Children for the 21st Century," research on **children's learning** was identified as one of the six most important and pressing needs to advance our understanding of how children grow up to be healthy, active, and productive citizens.

Productive programs of research are supported throughout the Foundation bearing on children, learning, or transition to the workforce. It is recognized, however, that disciplinary boundaries create barriers to cross-disciplinary interactions. NSF is unique among the Federal granting agencies in its ability to support the building of bridges across many areas of science simultaneously. It is in this spirit that we are offering supplements to the awards of NSF grantees who are working in these areas, for the purpose of teaching others about their respective research and identifying common themes and potential collaborations. The major vehicle for doing this will be planning meetings that bring together the investigators, their colleagues, and their students. Papers will be presented and roundtable discussions will be held, with the requirement that each group produce a white paper outlining common points of intersection. These papers will then be synthesized by a blue-ribbon panel of experts to help identify a common research agenda.

The goal of these meetings is to encourage and facilitate interaction and collaboration that crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries. Research on children's learning deals with complex problems that demand multidisciplinary methods and expertise. Important contributions can already be found in such disciplines as cognitive science, neuroscience, education, and developmental psychology. Significant future progress is going to depend on new interactions that develop at the intersections of these and other areas of science.

The grant supplements now being offered are specifically intended to bring together groups of researchers who represent two or more distinct fields of science, but who share a common interest in understanding children's learning and how children develop into productive citizens.

If you think you would like to put together such a meeting, I encourage you to discuss your ideas with me or with your disciplinary program officer. To request support you will need to write a brief letter describing the theme of the meeting. You must also indicate who will participate (and who among them are current NSF PIs), participants' institutional affiliations, when and where the meeting will be held, how the meeting will be organized, and what products might come out of it. You will also need to submit a budget on NSF Form 1030, signed by the NSF PI and an authorized institutional representative. A minimum of \$800,000 is budgeted for this initiative, subject to availability of funds. It is expected that budgets of individual meetings will not typically exceed \$50,000 (including indirect costs), although proposals for larger meetings will be considered.

The meetings need not be limited to NSF grantees – you are encouraged to include other colleagues, including foreign experts, when appropriate, who are working on related problems (regardless of their sources of funding). We are especially interested in meetings that help to make connections between the funding interests of different federal agencies (such as NICHD, NIMH, Department of Education). Whenever possible, lists of grantees from other agencies will be posted at the TCW web site. The important point is to reach out beyond your own disciplinary area. Students should also be integral participants in the multidisciplinary meetings. This will offer students the opportunity to learn about other disciplinary perspectives bearing on their own interests, and to describe their interests to an audience that extends beyond their immediate disciplinary foci.

The format and scope of the meeting is up to you. Some meetings may be relatively small, and easily hosted within the existing institutional resources of colleges and universities. Other meetings may be very large, with dozens of participants meeting at a conference facility or hotel. Regardless of the size, these meetings should be broadly inclusive. Students, post-docs, and other junior research associates should be involved as full participants. You should also strive to include the participation of underrepresented groups (gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.). But the most important requirement is that your meeting include researchers who are working beyond your own disciplinary boundaries.

If the first meeting is productive, and the consensus is that additional meetings will help to facilitate the development of collaborative projects, then you may request support for up to two additional meetings. The request must be made in the form of a new proposal, and you will need to describe the results of the first meeting. Additional support will not be automatic; your request will be subject to the same kind of review as your initial request.

Your request for a supplement must be submitted to NSF no later than March 29, 1999. We are asking that all the initial meetings take place by mid-August, 1999. To help you

get started in thinking about a possible meeting, please visit the special NSF web site devoted to this initiative. The url is <http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/tcw>. At the web site you will find a list of NSF grants (including your own) that are related, in some way, to this initiative. This listing can provide an initial source for potential partners, but you certainly are not limited to this list in forming partnerships. The web site also provides links to other resources that provide important contextual information for this initiative, including the NSTC report and the FY99 budget language in support of EFF (you should focus especially on the paragraphs describing *Learning and Early Development* and *Transitions from Childhood to the Workforce*).

We recognize that this will not be a trivial undertaking. It will be an important one, and we hope that you will give very serious consideration to applying for supplemental support. As always, we cannot guarantee that a supplement request will be granted, but we will strive to fund as many as possible. The attached page provides additional details about the application procedure and the review of requests (including evaluation criteria).

Sincerely,

Steven J. Breckler
Program Director for Social Psychology

Transition from Childhood to the Workforce (TCW) Requesting Support

Who is eligible to apply? Principal Investigators of current NSF grants. Investigators who are not currently supported by NSF may participate by partnering with one or more NSF grantees. The TCW related awards portfolio and the NSF awards database are important resources for locating potential partners (both are available from the TCW web site, <http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/tcw>).

How do I apply? Submit a written request, no later than March 29, 1999, to:

TCW Supplements
National Science Foundation
Room 995
4201 Wilson Blvd
Arlington, VA 22230

What do I include in the request? A brief description of the theme of the meeting. You must also indicate who will participate (and who among them are current NSF PIs), participants' institutional affiliations, when and where the meeting will be held, how the meeting will be organized, and what products might come out of it. You will also need to submit a budget on NSF Form 1030, signed by the NSF PI and an authorized institutional representative. It is expected that budgets will not typically exceed \$50,000 (including indirect costs), although proposals for larger meetings will be considered

How will my request be evaluated? All requests will be evaluated for their scientific merit. The review will be conducted by a panel of NSF Program Officers, according to the two standard review criteria described in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide (NSF 99-2): (1) What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity? and (2) What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity? Special emphasis will be placed on the degree to which the proposed meeting is likely to promote collaborative integration in research on children, learning, and transition to the workforce. The evaluation will also consider the integration of diversity, as described in the following paragraph.

Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities. Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens – women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities – is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports. PIs should address this issue in their request to provide reviewers with the information necessary to respond fully to both NSF merit review criteria. NSF staff will give it careful consideration in making funding decisions.

How do I obtain additional information? You can send e-mail to: tcw@nsf.gov. To speak with someone about this funding opportunity, you should call: (703) 306-1728.

Notices from the National Science Foundation

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. Grantees are wholly responsible for conducting their project activities and preparing the results for publication. Thus, the Foundation does not assume responsibility for such findings or their interpretation.

NSF welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists, engineers and educators. The Foundation strongly encourages women, minorities, and persons with disabilities to compete fully in its programs. In accordance with federal statutes, regulations, and NSF policies, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NSF (unless otherwise specified in the eligibility requirements for a particular program).

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities (investigators and other staff, including student research assistants) to work on NSF-supported projects. See the program announcement or contact the program coordinator at (703) 306-1636.

The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation regarding NSF programs, employment, or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 306-0090 or through FIRS on 1-800-877-8339.

PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the review process; to applicant institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies needing information as part of the review process or in order to coordinate programs; and to another Federal agency, court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 267 (January 5, 1998), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 268 (January 5, 1998). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Reports Clearance Officer; Information Dissemination Branch, DAS; National Science Foundation; Arlington, VA 22230.

YEAR 2000 REMINDER

In accordance with Important Notice No. 120 dated June 27, 1997, Subject: Year 2000 Computer Problem, NSF awardees are reminded of their responsibility to take appropriate actions to ensure that the NSF activity being supported is not adversely affected by the Year 2000 problem. Potentially affected items include: computer systems, databases, and equipment. The National Science Foundation should be notified if an awardee concludes that the Year 2000 will have a significant impact on its ability to carry out an NSF funded activity. Information concerning Year 2000 activities can be found on the NSF web site at <http://www.nsf.gov/oirm/y2k/start.htm>.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance: CFDA Numbers 47.041 (Engineering), 47.049 (Mathematical and Physical Sciences), 47.050 (Geosciences), 47.070 (Computer and Information Science and Engineering), 47.074 (Biological Sciences), 47.075 (Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences), 47.076 (Education and Human Resources), 47.078 (Polar Programs)

OMB# 3145-0058

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